

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

Historic name Miller, Sidney D., Junior High and High School

Other names/site number Miller, Sidney D., Middle School

2. Location

street & number 2322 DuBois St.

☐ not for publication

city or town Detroit

☐ vicinity

State Michigan code MI county Wayne code 163 zip code 48207

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide X local

Brian D. Miller

Signature of certifying official

10/17/11

Date

Michigan State Historic Preservation Officer
Title

Michigan State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

☒ entered in the National Register

Patrick Andrews

12/12/2011

☐ determined eligible for the National Register

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register

☐ removed from the National Register

☐ other (explain:)

Miller, Sidney D., Junior High School/Miller, Sidney D., High School
Name of Property

Wayne, MI
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal
<input type="checkbox"/>	private

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		Objects
		buildings
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Public Schools of Detroit

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Gothic Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Brick

roof: Asphalt

other: Stone

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

Sidney D. Miller Junior High School is located about one mile northeast of downtown Detroit. Completed in 1921, Miller School is one of the only remaining buildings associated with the city's Black Bottom neighborhood, in which it occupies a full, rectangular city block. The western two-thirds of this block are occupied by the school building which, with several additions, occupies a rectangular footprint and encloses a central courtyard. The flat-roofed, Collegiate Gothic brick building varies between one and two and a half stories in height. The eastern third of the block, formerly occupied by the building's playfield, now contains a parking lot. The building is vacant, but in good condition and retains a high degree of historic integrity.

Narrative Description

Miller Junior High School sits on a site of a little over two and a half acres, bounded by DuBois, Waterloo, Chene, and Jay Streets. The building faces west onto DuBois Street, and is situated close to the street, with a setback of about fifteen to thirty feet. The narrow setback of the school's footprint is a reminder of the building's prior relationship with a densely-populated residential neighborhood which no longer exists.

The area immediately surrounding Miller School has changed drastically since the building was constructed in the years 1919 to 1921. Originally, Miller School shared its block with Johnson School, an elementary school, as well as several detached homes on the eastern third of the block. The block was surrounded on all sides by a neighborhood of single-family and two-family homes. The other buildings on Miller School's block were razed in the 1920s to allow for additions to the building and the creation of a school playfield. During the "urban renewal" of the 1950s, homes on all sides of the building were razed to allow the creation of the municipal St. Aubin Waterloo playfield to the south and west, less-dense residential townhomes to the north and east, and a widened Chene Street. Presently, Jay, DuBois, and Waterloo streets are vacated and no longer maintained for vehicle use. Waterloo Street retains its brick paving, while the other streets are paved with asphalt. The school's former playfield is now paved with a patchwork of asphalt, concrete, and gravel.

The Miller School building, completed in 1921, originally occupied an L-shaped footprint. The building is two stories tall, sitting on a high, windowed basement, and features a flat roof over a majority of its area. It is clad in brown common-bond brickwork with masonry trim. Its façade (west elevation) is asymmetrical, articulated into nine bays. Much of the façade is pierced with evenly spaced bays of four windows each. All of the building's windows are recent aluminum replacements, and are not visible from the exterior due to a covering of protective steel panels. At the north end of the façade is a prominent front-gabled auditorium, gymnasium, and dining room wing, which projects slightly and extends to the east. Its tall first floor, featuring a two-story auditorium space, is lit by a projecting, flat-roofed bay window, while its upper level, housing a dining room, is lit by a large Gothic-arched window. Paired buttresses anchor the sides of this projecting section, while a triangular parapet extends upwards. The building's main entrance, located slightly south of center, sits within a Gothic-arched, buttressed, stone surround. The words "SIDNEY D MILLER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL" are displayed above the entrance in raised bronze lettering. Directly south of the entrance is a three-sided, projecting, quoined bay. Gothic-arched side entrances exist on the north and south elevations of the building's original, 1921 portion.

A 1931 addition expanded the building further east, adding a gable-roofed gymnasium directly east of the building's auditorium, and expanding the building's south elevation with additional classrooms. A secondary, south façade created by this addition features a two-story, asymmetrical, projecting entrance pavilion, featuring an off-center Gothic-arched doorway and masonry details including quoins, tabbed window surrounds, and a stone panel featuring a shield decoration on the upper story. A parapet wall above features blocks of stone interspersed with brick, creating a checkerboard pattern. A small, single-story addition, added in 1951, completes the building and encloses a central courtyard.

Sidney Miller School has two main entries at the center of the building and the south-west corner of the building facing Antietam Avenue to the south. Each main entry corridor has a stair accessing all three levels of the building. Six additional stairs are located at the end of the two main corridors, at the center of the west building façade, and at the north façade near the auditorium lobby. Classroom spaces are primarily located in the original L shaped building, on the south and west

side of the building, flanking either side of the central corridor. The typical classrooms have built-in wood storage units consisting of a wood paneled teacher's closet, and shelves with glass doors and wooden drawers below. At the center of the building is an interior courtyard. Administrative offices are located on the first floor, facing the interior courtyard. At the basement level, on the east side of the building, is a pool with a lounge area that ramps down below the parking on grade. As noted above, a two-story girls' gymnasium and one-story boys' gymnasium are located on the north side of the building. The girls' gymnasium has exposed masonry walls, suspended light fixtures, and a vaulted ceiling supported by steel trusses. The boys' gymnasium has a dropped ceiling with surface mounted fixtures. Above the boys' gymnasium is an auditorium and on the second floor is the lunchroom. The auditorium has suspended light fixtures and decorative plaster molding around the stage opening. On either side of the stage are a set of stairs and doors leading back stage. At present, Sidney Miller School retains the integrity of its original floor plan and additions.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

☐

G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

☒

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

☐

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐

B removed from its original location.

☐

C a birthplace or grave.

☐

D a cemetery.

☐

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐

F a commemorative property.

Miller, Sidney D., Junior High School/Miller, Sidney D., High School
Name of Property

Wayne, MI
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Ethnic History

Community Planning and Development

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

African American

Period of Significance

1918-1957

Architect/Builder

Malcomson & Higginbotham

Significant Dates

1921, 1933

Period of Significance (justification)

The Period of Significance begins with the building's groundbreaking and concludes with the date that it ceased to be used as a high school.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

Sidney D. Miller Junior High School is locally significant under *Criterion A* as a rare survivor of the City of Detroit's Black Bottom neighborhood, almost all of which was razed in the 1950s and 1960s to make way for "urban renewal" projects such as the Walter P. Chrysler Freeway and the residential developments of Lafayette Park and Elmwood Park. By the late 1920s, due to housing discrimination and other forms of de-facto segregation, this neighborhood had become predominantly African American. In addition to its tenure as an intermediate school, Miller served as a high school from 1933 to 1957, and discrimination on the part of the Detroit Board of Education ensured that this school was almost exclusively African American while white students from the area attended high school elsewhere. Under *Criterion C*, Miller Junior High School is significant as an earlier example of Malcomson & Higginbotham's work in the Collegiate Gothic style, unique due to the asymmetry of its massing.

Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance)

Conceived in 1918, Sidney D. Miller Junior High School was initially intended to be named Dubois Junior High School, after the street on which it was located. The planned school was soon renamed after Miller (1831-1904), an attorney and member of the Detroit Board of Education who had also been president of the Detroit Savings Bank and vice president of Eureka Iron and Steel Works. The partially complete building opened in April 1921 to serve 664 students under the city's new platoon system. Construction was delayed as plans were revised several times, and the building was completed in

1921. When the building's eastern wing was completed in 1922, it brought the building's capacity to 1,700. An addition including a girls' gymnasium was completed in 1931 at a cost of \$88,651.

While the school opened to a mostly white population, the area soon became predominately African American. A majority of this population had recently come to Detroit in search of jobs in the city's growing manufacturing industry.

Due a rapidly increasing demand for high school education in the city, Miller School was reorganized as a high school in 1933. Although segregation in the state's public schools had been illegal since a Michigan Supreme Court ruling in 1870, discriminatory policies on the part of the Detroit Board of Education established an informal system of discrimination by which Miller's population became almost exclusively African American while the area's white students were able to attend school elsewhere. Also in 1933, the Board of Education enacted policies allowing students and parents living on the city's near east side their choice of the area's high schools. This had the effect of concentrating African American students at Miller High School while white students attended elsewhere.

The building was designated a high school in 1933, and graduated its first class in June 1935. At this time, demand for secondary education was increasing and nearby high schools such as Cass Technical, Northeastern, and Eastern were at capacity. Miller was accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1936. The building continued to grow and a swimming pool was added in 1951.

During Detroit's "urban renewal" programs of the 1950s and 1960s, almost all of the buildings in the Black Bottom area on the city's near east side were demolished. Three of the buildings spared were schools: Miller Junior High School, Nellie Leland School, and Duffield School. Miller School served as a high school until 1957, and then was used as a middle school until it was closed and vacated in 2007.

Miller Junior High School was designed by Malcomson & Higginbotham, exclusive architects for the Detroit school system 1893 to 1923. It is a somewhat earlier example of the firm's work in the Collegiate Gothic style, and would be followed by larger and more monumental buildings in that style. It is noteworthy among Malcomson & Higginbotham's work, and among Detroit schools as a whole, for the strong asymmetry of its façade. While many other school buildings lack symmetry due to wings that were planned but never built, or due to alterations to the building beyond its original plan, only Miller School was strongly asymmetrical in its initial design.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government

Miller, Sidney D., Junior High School/Miller, Sidney D., High School
Name of Property

Wayne, MI
County and State

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	17	332682	4690421	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

1 THRU 15 BLK 29 DUBOIS SUB L1 P163 PLATS, W C R 9/26 1 THRU 24 BLK 20 JAS CAMPAU FARM L2 P17 PLATS, W C R 9/1 & E1/2 OF VAC DUBOIS, N1/2 OF VAC JAY & VAC ALLEYS ADJ EXC CHENE ST AS WD 9

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundaries described above include the entire parcel historically associated with Miller School.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Timothy Boscarino
organization City of Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board date March 25, 2009
street & number CAYMC, 2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 204 telephone (313) 224-3487
city or town Detroit state MI zip code 48226
e-mail cc-historic@detroitmi.gov

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- Continuation Sheets**
- Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

See continuation sheet.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9

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Bibliography

Detroit, City of, Board of Education. *Histories of the Public Schools of Detroit*. Detroit: Board of Education, 1967.

Detroit, City of, Buildings and Safety Engineering Department. *Building Permit Card Index*. Permit #29248, June 29, 1950.

Sanborn Map Company. *Detroit, Mich.* Vol. 4, Sheet 53. Pelham, NY: Sanborn Map Company, 2003.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10

Page 1

Photographs

Photographer: Timothy Boscarino (exterior), and Deborah Goldstein (interior)

Date: November 2008, June 2009

Paper and Ink: HP Premium Plus Glossy Photo Paper, HP Viverra Ink

1. South (Jay) and west (DuBois) elevations.
(MI_Wayne_MillerSch0001.tif)
2. West elevation.
(MI_Wayne_MillerSch0002.tif)
3. Original main entrance on west elevation.
(MI_Wayne_MillerSch0003.tif)
4. North (Waterloo) elevation.
(MI_Wayne_MillerSch0004.tif)
5. South elevation.
(MI_Wayne_MillerSch0005.tif)
6. Girls' gymnasium.
(MI_Wayne_MillerSch0006.tif)
7. Auditorium.
(MI_Wayne_MillerSch0008.tif)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Miller, Sidney D., Junior High and High School

MULTIPLE NAME: Public Schools of Detroit MPS

STATE & COUNTY: MICHIGAN, Wayne

DATE RECEIVED: 7/22/10 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/13/10
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/30/10 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/05/10
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10000689

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

___ ACCEPT ☒ RETURN ___ REJECT 9/7/2010 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

See attached Return Sheet for detailed comment

RECOM./CRITERIA Return

REVIEWER Patrick Andrus

DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 9/7/2010

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20240

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Miller, Sidney D., Junior High and High School (Wayne County, MI)

Reference Number: 10000689

Multiple Property Submission: Public Schools of Detroit MPS, Wayne County, MI

Reason for Return:

The nomination is being returned for additional information. The Public Schools of Detroit Multiple Property Submission includes 87 individually nominated schools. None of the National Register registration forms describe or evaluate the integrity of the interiors of the nominated school buildings. The National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*, stipulates that the registration form for a building must describe significant interior features.

The multiple property submission form describes the registration requirements for public schools in Detroit (Section F, pages 3-4) and one requirement is that the building must retain integrity of design. The National Register defines design as the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. For a school building, the description of the interior should provide information on the major character defining spaces, such as the entryways, stairways, hallways, classroom arrangements, auditoriums, offices, cafeterias, and gymnasiums. In addition, significant interior decorative features should be described.

Please provide a description of the school building's interior, an evaluation of the interior's integrity and representative interior photographs.

Patrick Andrus, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
202-354-2218
patrick_andrus@nps.gov
9/7/2010

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: Miller, Sidney D., Junior High and High School

MULTIPLE NAME: Public Schools of Detroit MPS

STATE & COUNTY: MICHIGAN, Wayne

DATE RECEIVED: 10/28/11

DATE OF PENDING LIST:

DATE OF 16TH DAY:

DATE OF 45TH DAY:

12/13/11

DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10000689

DETAILED EVALUATION:

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 12/12/2011 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

On resubmission the State has provided a description and photographs of the interior of the school

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A & C

REVIEWER Patrick Andrews

DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 12/12/2011

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



MILLER SCH
DETROIT WAYNE MI



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DETROIT WAYNE MI



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DETROIT WAYNE MI



MILLER SCH
DETROIT WAYNE MI
4



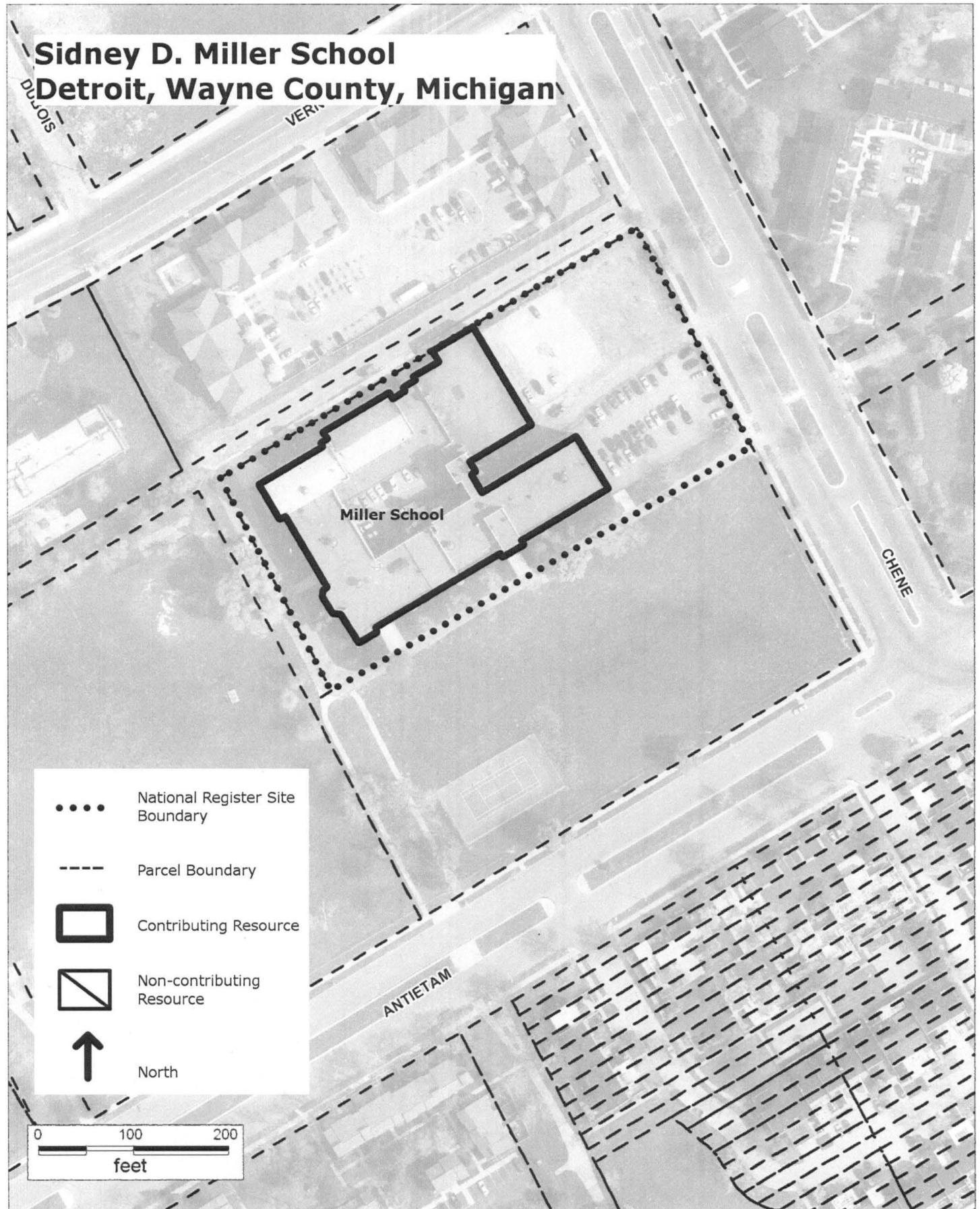
MILLER SCH
DETROIT WAYNE MI



MI - Wayne County - Miller School - 006



MI-Wayne County - Milla School 007



Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

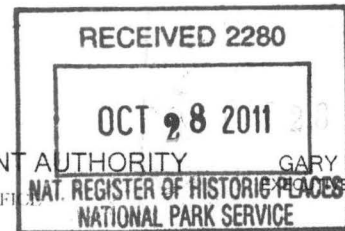
Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64501081



STATE OF MICHIGAN

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



GARY HEIDEL
DIRECTOR

September 30, 2011

Ms. Carol Shull, Interim Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed is a national register nomination forms for the Atkinson School, Sidney D. Miller Junior and Senior High School, Cooley School, and Doty School in Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan. These properties form parts of the Detroit Public Schools multiple property nomination previously submitted to the register. The register accepted and retained the multiple property form with the accompanying USGS mapping, but returned to us the nomination forms for the individual nominated schools because of the lack of interior descriptions and photographs. We have added interior description and interior photographs to the nominations and provided new CDs that for each school contain all the exterior and interior photos.

For the Atkinson School, we note that the acreage was incorrectly stated as 14.12 in the original submission, but is now corrected to about 7 acres.

These properties are being submitted for listing in the national register. No written comments concerning this nomination were submitted to us prior to the submission of this nomination to you.

Questions concerning this nomination should be addressed to Robert O. Christensen, national register coordinator, by phone at 517/335-2719 or by email at christensenr@michigan.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Brian D. Conway
State Historic Preservation Officer

BDC:roc

